

AP English Language and Composition
Mrs. Thomas
Course Syllabus
2013-2014

Course Description/Overview

AP English Language and Composition is equivalent to a first-year college-level writing course, designed to engage students in becoming skilled readers of prose written in a variety of periods, disciplines, and rhetorical contexts and in becoming skilled writers who compose for a variety of purposes. Students will become aware of and analyze a writer's purpose, audience, subjects, conventions, and effectiveness and be able to compose their own prose of sufficient richness and complexity to communicate effectively with mature readers.

The course will focus on expository, analytical, and argumentative writing as well as personal and reflective writing. Students will also be asked to synthesize sources in a researched argument paper, and will analyze graphics and visual images in print and electronic media.

It is the assumption that students enrolled in this course already have a strong foundation in standard English grammar. Therefore, students in AP English Language and Composition will focus on the link between grammar and style. Stylistic development will be nurtured by emphasizing a wide-ranging vocabulary; a variety of sentence structures; logical organization, enhanced by specific techniques to increase coherence, such as repetition, transitions, and emphasis; a balance of generalization and specific illustrative detail; and an effective use of rhetoric, including controlling tone, establishing and maintaining voice, and achieving appropriate emphasis through diction and sentence structure. In their reading, students will learn how stylistic effects are achieved by writers' linguistic choices.

Representative authors used in this course will come from but not be limited to those listed in the AP English Language and Composition Course Description provided by the College Board. Nonfiction prose will comprise a majority of readings in this course, but will be supplemented by fiction and poetry from a standpoint of stylistic and rhetorical analysis.

Contact Information

My planning period is second hour 9:00 - 9:50 A.M. If a conference is desired, parents can reach me by calling the office at 387-6322, my voicemail at 387-6479, or by e-mailing me. I will be happy to get back with you to discuss any concerns. I am available on Thursdays for tutoring or extra help after school.

Course Content

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- analyze and interpret samples of good writing, identifying and explaining an author's use of rhetorical strategies and techniques;
- apply effective strategies and techniques in their own writing;
- create and sustain arguments based on readings, research, and/or personal experience;
- write for a variety of purposes;
- produce expository, analytical, and argumentative compositions that introduce a complex central idea and develop it with appropriate evidence drawn from primary and/or secondary sources, cogent explanations, and clear transitions;
- demonstrate understanding and mastery of standard written English as well as stylistic maturity in their own writings;
- demonstrate understanding of the conventions of citing primary and secondary sources;
- move effectively through the stages of the writing process, with careful attention to inquiry and research, drafting, revising, editing, and review;
- write thoughtfully about their own process of composition;
- revise a work to make it suitable for a different audience;
- analyze image as text; and
- evaluate and incorporate reference documents into researched papers.

First Nine Weeks

Concepts:

Review Literary Analysis

Determining the Rhetorical Situation (Persona, Intent, Genre, Subject, Audience, Context)

Canons of Rhetoric

Rhetorical Analysis

Appeals--logos, ethos, pathos

Arrangement

Style--schemes, tropes, satire, diction, tone, syntax

Analysis to Synthesis--After reading each selection students will determine the rhetorical situation and then synthesize their analysis into one or two overarching sentences about the context.

Analysis Vocabulary

Tone Vocabulary

Sentence Structure--Modeling professional style

Absolute phrases

Vocabulary Practice

Readings:

"Beginnings" by Susan Sontag
"On Natural Death" by Lewis Thomas
"Blessed is the Full Plate" by Anna Quindlen
"Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" by Jonathan Edwards
"A Modest Proposal" by Jonathan Swift
"What to the Slave is the 4th of July" by Frederick Douglass
"The Declaration of Independence" by Thomas Jefferson
"Speech in the Virginia Convention" by Patrick Henry
John F. Kennedy, Inaugural Address, 20 January 1961
"The Round Walls of Home" by Diane Ackerman

Précis - "Seeing the Forest Through the Eyes of Our Children" by Dave Barry

Major Essay: Rhetorical analysis

Students will complete a thorough rhetorical analysis of the speech "What to the Slave is the Fourth of July" by Frederick Douglass. Students will first work in groups to analyze the piece, complete drafts individually, and then each student will write the essay, focusing on the most effective rhetorical elements the author uses to convey his/her purpose.

This nine weeks, the students will complete several short writings analyzing rhetorical situation, style, appeals, arrangement, tone, and syntax from a variety of readings (as listed above). They will also be required to demonstrate proficiency with academic vocabulary related to the above rhetorical elements.

This nine weeks and all year long, the students will work individually, collaboratively, and will participate in class discussion intended to develop critical thinking and voice.

Novels:

When the Emperor Was Divine by Julie Otsuka
The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave by Frederick Douglass
Breaking Night by Liz Murray

Second Nine Weeks

Concepts:

Argumentation
 Inductive
 Deductive

The Toulmin Model

Enthymeme

Claim

Issue

Warrant

Evidence, Qualifiers, and Rebuttal

Argument of definition, evaluation, and proposal

Modeling Writing Style, Review grammar for stylistic techniques

Review Schemes and Tropes

Sentence Structure for Style--syntactical techniques (coordination,
subordination, periodic sentence, parallelism)

Diction

Precise, Direct, and Active Verbs

Readings:

"The Four Idols" by Francis Bacon

"Self-Reliance" by Ralph Waldo Emerson

"Civil Disobedience" by Henry David Thoreau

"The Penalty of Death" by H.L. Mencken

"The Position of Poverty" by John Kenneth Galbraith

"Huck, Jim, and Racial Discourse" by David L. Smith

"Morality and Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" by Julius Lester

"I Have A Dream" by Martin Luther King

"Ain't I A Woman" by Sojourner Truth

"Shakespeare's Sister" by Virginia Woolf

Major Essays: Argument of Proposal, Argument of Evaluation, and
Argument of Definition

After studying several chapters from *Everything's an Argument*, students complete the three major argumentative papers listed above each around 750 - 1000 words. Students will follow the writing process, completing prewriting/proposals, drafting, peer and teacher reviews, and final draft.

The students will also participate in debates on current social issues this nine weeks.

Novel:

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain

Third Nine Weeks

Concepts:

Timed Writing Practice

Synthesis

Jigsaw--synthesis analysis

Developing writing finesse

Causal Argument

The Researched Argument

Assessing, Integrating, and Documenting Sources

Primary and Secondary Resources

MLA Style

Clauses and Phrases (absolute, appositive, etc.)

Readings:

"The Happy Life" Bertrand Russell

"The Singer Solution to World Poverty" Peter Singer

"Lifeboat Ethics: The Case Against Helping the Poor" Garrett Hardin

"In Westminster Abbey" John Betjeman

"Reflections" painting by Lee Teter

"Three Servicemen" sculpture by Frederick Hart

Students will synthesize the above texts to present a view of the individual's responsibility to the larger human community.

"Me Talk Pretty One Day" by David Sedaris

"Aria: A Memoir of Bilingual Childhood" by Richard Rodriguez

"Mother Tongue" by Amy Tan

Students will synthesize the above texts to write an essay about the power of language.

Major Essay: Researched Causal Argument

The students will research, analyze, and synthesize a variety of sources to write a researched causal argument of 1,000 to 1,500 words. Students must choose a literary movement or writer and argue how historical events prompted that movement or writer's content. Students must synthesize writings from a literary period or from a prolific writer to support their causal argument. Students will use correct MLA style and will study and demonstrate ability to write effective thesis statements, to organize logically and use transitions, and to cite sources properly.

Novel:

The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald

Fourth Nine Weeks

Concepts:

Multimedia Presentation/Speech (on research paper topic)

Timed Writings

Humor in Writing

Analysis of Personal and Reflective Writings

Personal/Reflective Essay

Finding your own voice

AP Test Practice

EOI Test Practice

Novel Study

Readings:

"Road Warrior" by Dave Barry

"More Than Just a Shrine" by Mary Gordon

"Salvation" by Langston Hughes

"Once More to the Lake" by E. B. White

"The Knife" by Richard Selzer

"In Bed" by Joan Didion

"The Courage of Turtles" by Richard Selzer

From "Way to Rainy Mountain" by N. Scott Momaday

"Living Like Weasels" by Annie Dillard

"Allegory of the Cave" by Plato

"Shooting an Elephant" by George Orwell

Major Paper: Reflective/Personal Essay

Students will keep a journal this nine weeks from which they can draw material for their reflective essays of at least 1,000 words.

Throughout the year, students will also analyze visual media, such as posters, ads, cartoons, and video clips to analyze rhetorical elements and arguments as well as inclusion in synthesis essays and AP test practice. Students will analyze overview/subject, parts/specific elements, title, interrelationships, and draw a conclusion about the piece as a whole. They will then be asked to relate these ideas to those found in their readings or life experiences.

Novels:

The Scarlet Letter by Nathaniel Hawthorne

Readings from *The Things They Carried* by Tim O'Brien

Course Materials

Textbooks and Teacher Resources:

Aaron, Jane, ed. *The Little, Brown Compact Handbook*. New York: Longman, 2004.

Print.

Barnet, Sylvan and Hugo Bedau. *Current Issues and Enduring Questions*. New York:

Bedford/St. Martins, 2011. Print.

DiYanni, Robert. *One Hundred Great Essays*. New York: Pearson Longman, 2008. Print.

Jacobus, Lee A. *A World of Ideas: Essential Readings for College Writers*. Boston, MA:

Bedford/St. Martins, 2010. Print.

Kinsella, Kate. *Prentice Hall Literature*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall,

2007. Print.

Lunsford, Andrea A., and John J. Ruszkiewicz. *Everything's an Argument*. Boston:

Bedford/St. Martin's, 2007. Print.

Lunsford, Andrea A., Paul Kei. Matsuda, and Christine M. Tardy. *The Everyday Writer*.

Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 2009. Print.

Miller, George, ed. *The Prentice Hall Reader*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Prentice

Hall, 2007. Print.

Roskelly, Hephzibah, and David A. Jolliffe. *Everyday Use: Rhetoric at Work in Reading*

and Writing. New York: Pearson Longman, 2009. Print.

Shea, Renée Hausmann., Lawrence Scanlon, and Robin Dissin. Aufses. *The Language of*

Composition: Reading, Writing and Rhetoric. Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's,

2008. Print.

Trimmer, Joseph F., and Heather Milliet. *The Riverside Reader*. Boston: Houghton

Mifflin, 2009. Print.

Materials Students Will Need to Bring:

Three-ring binder

Notebook paper

Pens/pencils

Colored pencils

Dividers (5)

Clorox Wipes or Wet Wipes

*Other materials may be needed later for special projects; I will let you know in advance what you need.

Notebook Divisions:

Literature Terms

Vocabulary

Journal

G.P.S. Skills (**G**rammar/**P**unctuation/**S**entence Structure)

Graded papers

Course Policies and Procedures:

1. All rules in the school handbook or given by the principal will be upheld in my classroom.
2. Bring all required materials to class.
3. Keep a positive attitude. Please let me know if you need help; I am willing and happy to help you with any assignment that is giving you trouble.
4. Be on time. If you are not seated and ready to work when the bell rings, you will be counted tardy.
5. Be respectful to your classmates and teacher. Raise your hand to add a comment to the class discussion, and don't interrupt. Please don't roam around the classroom; find something to work on if you finish early.
6. Turn in the given assignments. All the assignments given in this class have a purpose; failing to complete an assignment may cause you to fail to understand an important concept. Plus, zeros can ruin your grade.
7. Absolutely no violence of any kind (verbal or physical) will be tolerated.
8. Be courteous to others and respect property.
9. Cell phones are not to be out during class. Keep them put away with the power turned off. Cell phones used during class will be confiscated.
10. Food and/or drinks are not allowed in the classroom. (Bottled water is okay.)
11. Students will be given three chances per nine weeks to go to the restroom, lockers, or office. You must use one of the three hall passes I give you at the beginning of the nine weeks. It is YOUR responsibility to keep up with your passes. You may choose to save your passes and turn them in at the end of the nine weeks for extra credit.

*Failure to follow these guidelines will result in consequences deemed

appropriate for the given situation. This could include actions such as seating change, personal conference on your own time, parental contact, and referral to the office.

Grading Policies:

Absences

You are allowed no more than ten absences per semester. Anything above that earns you no credit. Take doctor's notes to the office.

If you are absent, you must make up the work that was missed. That is YOUR responsibility. You must come to me to get missed assignments and turn them in. One day per day missed plus one is given for make-up work.

Grades

At least two grades will be taken every week. The online grade book is updated weekly.

Assignments, Quizzes, Projects, and Tests

Assignments are worth 50-100 points, quizzes are worth 200, and tests are worth 300. The Semester Test is worth 10% of your final grade each semester. Projects may be worth more or less than a homework assignment depending on the extent of the project; students will be notified ahead of time the value of each project.

Late Work

Late work is highly discouraged in my class. Procrastination is a bad habit and will significantly reduce your grade. Late work will only be accepted for half credit up to one week late. After that no credit will be given.

Extra Credit

I will offer some form of extra credit each nine weeks, and I recommend you take advantage of it. Every little bit helps!

Progress Reports

Progress reports will be sent home every three weeks. Students and parents can also access student grades at any time from a secured website. Contact the office for a password.

Additional Info.

Students enrolled in AP classes will be given to opportunity to take the AP test in May. Students scoring a 3 or higher may have the chance to earn college credit. The cost of the test runs around \$87.

Please sign on the appropriate line and return to me by Friday. (This is

your first assignment worth 100 points.) After getting the form signed, keep the syllabus part in your binder to use as a reference. Turn in the signature page into the basket on my desk.

I have read the course syllabus for AP English Language and Composition and I understand all the policies and expectations of this class.

Student's Printed Name_____

Student's Signature _____

Parent's Printed Name_____

Parent's Signature_____

Parent Phone Numbers
(Home)_____ (Work/Cell)_____

Parent E-mail _____